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THE LETTERS OF LORD ACTON.

BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE JAMES BRYCE, M.P.

LORD ACTON was one of the most remarkable and most peculiar figures in the generation which is now beginning to pass away. He was also one of those whom his contemporaries least understood. Though never widely known to the English public—if, indeed, any one but a jockey or a cricketer can be said to be really widely known in modern England—his name had become familiar to cultivated society during the last twenty years of his life. Yet, he was little more than a name. People talked vaguely of his boundless learning or recalled the resistance which he, a devout Catholic layman, had organized in 1870 to the acceptance of the Vatican Decree of Papal Infallibility, or attributed to him an influence over Mr. Gladstone's opinions on ecclesiastical subjects. But hardly anybody really understood either the quality of his mind or the range of his attainments.

This volume* will go a long way, though not all the way, to explain him and to make him a living figure to his younger contemporaries. It contains a sketch of his life, prepared by the skilful pen of Mr. Herbert Paul, who knew him personally, and a collection of Letters addressed by him (mostly from abroad) during the years 1879 to 1886 to Miss Mary Gladstone (now Mrs. Henry Drew), second daughter of the late Mr. W. E. Gladstone. The biographical sketch is an excellent piece of work, clear, concise and vivid. In reading the life of a person with whom one has been intimate, one is often apt to say, "This is well done, and, if I had known the man less thoroughly, I might have thought it a lifelike portrait." No one who knew Lord Acton will make such a remark in this case. The biography does not tell everything about its subject that might have been told; nor will all

* Lord Acton's Letters to Mary Gladstone. Macmillan, 1904.

that it says find universal agreement. But it gives within its short compass a view of his character, an estimate of his gifts, and a statement of his position in political and ecclesiastical matters which is not only illuminative but just and true.

The main facts of his life may be set forth in a few words. Born at Naples in 1834, the son of an English father and a German mother, both of ancient lineage, he was educated in the Roman Catholic College at Oscott, near Birmingham, under Dr. (afterwards Cardinal) Wiseman, and at Munich under the illustrious Dr. von Döllinger. He sat in the House of Commons for a few years, but thereafter lived mostly abroad, usually in Bavaria, where he had married a German lady, daughter of Count Arco Valley. For a time he edited the "Home and Foreign Review," an organ of Liberal Catholicism, which ultimately succumbed to the censure of Catholic authority, and he contributed largely to the "North British Review." In 1869 and 1870, he took an active part in stimulating, by his private influence and by his immense learning, the opposition which the more liberal part of the Roman Catholic Episcopate made to the proclamation at the Vatican Council of the doctrine of the infallibility (in matters of faith) of the Pope. This was the part of his career which brought him most into contact with the world of action; and it was followed by writings in which he defended the position of an orthodox Catholic who disapproved of that doctrine, yet refused to separate himself from the Church. In 1869, he received a peerage at the instance of Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister; and in 1892 he was appointed a Lord in Waiting in Mr. Gladstone's last administration. Selected in 1895 by Lord Rosebery to be Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, he lectured in that university until attacked by the malady of which he died in 1902. He wrote no large book, and never found time even to collect and republish the articles which he had contributed to various reviews, for the acquisition of knowledge was the passion of his life. Yet, constant as were his labors and vast the range of his reading, he moved much in the world, enjoyed society, watched every phase of contemporary politics with unflagging interest. Though never, except during the Vatican Council, an actor in great affairs, he was always close to them, an observant student of the history that made itself under his eyes, as well as of all that the last three or four centuries had seen.

A few passages may profitably be quoted from Mr. Paul's sketch, in order to convey to the reader a general impression of the man upon whose Letters I am going to comment.

"Lord Acton's spacious forehead, his deep sonorous voice, his piercing eyes and his air of vigilant repose, were the outward signs of genuine power in which the latent force behind is greater than anything the surface displays. He might well have sat to Titian for one of those ecclesiastical statesmen whose mingled strength and subtlety have attracted the admiring gaze of three hundred and fifty years."

"The force and originality of his conversation are reflected in and may be inferred from his epistolary style. In absolutely uncongenial company he would maintain the silence of the tomb. But, when there was any community of taste or subject, he shone equally as a talker and as a listener. It was not that he tried to shine. He did not aim at epigram and his humor was as spontaneous as it was delightful. He loved to stimulate conversation in others, and no man had more sympathy with a good thing which he had not said himself. He was entirely free from jealousy, vanity and egoism. A merciless intellectual critic he could hardly help being. He had so trained and furnished his mind that it rejected instinctively a sophism or a false pretence. He was the raciest and most stimulating of companions, with an instinctive perception for the true significance of a hint."

"He was never a bookworm. When he was in London he constantly dined out, and he corresponded freely with Continental friends. Few people were more agreeable in a country house. No one assumed more naturally the aspect of disengaged leisure, and it was possible to live in the same house with him for weeks without ever seeing him read. Even the frivolities of the world were not beneath his notice. He liked to know about marriages before they occurred. He was an excellent judge of cookery and of wine. Yet the passion of his life was reading."

"He cared little for poetry, for art, or for pure literature, the literature of style. Of physical science he knew only what most educated men know. But he was well versed in metaphysics, he was a deep theologian, and his knowledge of modern history was bounded only by the limits of the theme."

"He was observant of everything and he made up his mind about everything. But, except where supreme principles—Truth, Right, Toleration, Freedom—were in question, he was cautious in the expression of opinion, and he always preferred to leave action to others. . . . He could never have written anything which was not literature of a high order—dignified, incisive, vigorous; and yet history was to him not literature but political philosophy, not an interesting narrative but a scientific study of cause and effect."*

* This last quotation is from a letter by a distinguished Cambridge teacher, Dr. Henry Jackson of Trinity College.

I have thought over many collections of letters of famous men, from Cicero down to Cowper, Gibbon, Macaulay, William von Humboldt and Prosper Mérimée, without being able to find any quite like those of Lord Acton's. For one thing, they are, though uniform in the texture of the thought, singularly various in subject and in manner. Some are light and gossipy, playing with the incidents of the moment. Others are disquisitions, studies of character, or miniature treatises upon the weightiest questions. Others again are political reflections and counsels, suggested by current events, counsels which seem to have been intended for the father of the lady who received them, and which might, in several instances, have been highly profitable to him. To comprehend all of the allusions to these current events, a considerable knowledge of the years 1880-85 is needed; and, as not every one has a copy of the "Annual Register" at his elbow, it would be well, in a future edition, to add to the brief footnotes which the editor has appended a few more, sufficient to explain the circumstances under which Lord Acton delivered his opinions.

It has long been a commonplace to say that newspapers and the penny postage have destroyed English letter-writing. This correspondence justifies rather than discredits the remark, inasmuch as these Letters were, nearly all of them, written from a foreign country, where the writer could not gather from such newspapers as reached him what was passing behind the scenes. Moreover, while he felt the need of expressing himself, he was removed from the society to or in which he would naturally have expressed himself either orally or by short notes, instead of by these long epistles so full of various matter. They contain—and here of course I am referring to the political observations only—the reflections of one who is not in the middle of things, but looking at them from outside, with a full knowledge of most of the actors, but an imperfect knowledge of the momentary aspect of the problems changing from day to day, with which the actors have to deal. Hence, they are less valuable as materials for the future historian—*i.e.*, they tell us less about what was actually passing behind the scenes—than those other letters which Lord Acton, when in England, wrote to his nearest relatives and friends abroad, but which it is not at present intended to publish. Those who live to read these last-named letters will learn a good deal that is now known to very few. Here there is comparatively lit-

the revelation of secrets. Yet these reflections of a singularly acute and penetrating mind are full of interest, especially to those whose personal recollection can carry them back over the last twenty-five years. Acton is not always right in his judgment of men, overestimating, to take a recurring instance, not perhaps the abilities, but the practical capacity for diplomacy, of Sir Robert Morier. He does not always see in what direction the stream of tendency is running. He assumes, for instance, that Sir H. S. Maine's book against democratic government would be warmly welcomed by reactionaries in England, and would have political effect there, not realizing that the demerits of democratic government had in 1882 virtually ceased to be a live issue in England. Other minor errors might be mentioned. But he brings immense knowledge and profound thought to bear upon practical politics in a way so rare that I can recall no parallel to it within living memory. Tocqueville and Schérer, both of whom Acton admired, had not half of their admirer's learning. Neither had Cornwall Lewis, nor Molesworth; while Macaulay's mind, with all its vigor, was not at bottom philosophical. It is an unusual pleasure to find in these Letters a man who carries all modern history in his head applying himself to the question of Home Rule for Ireland, to the nature of the English party system (p. 199), to the remedies for Parliamentary obstruction (p. 67), to the capacity of the masses for sharing in the government of the country (pp. 90-96). Whether or not you agree with Lord Acton, you can never ignore his view; and seldom, indeed, does it happen that you do not learn something new, something worth remembering, from his way of illustrating or enforcing his opinion. He was extremely fond of copying out and preserving on slips of paper passages from the authors he read, which contained some statement he thought valuable; and, indeed, he spent far too much of his time in this practice, which might have been very proper in the days of the antediluvian patriarchs, or might be proper now for a man without original power but intelligent enough to know what is good. Whoever does resort to such a practice could not employ it better than on Acton's own compositions. Few writers better deserve to be so handled. On almost every page of these Letters there is some dictum, or some anecdote, or some phrase happily hitting off a character, which any one with the tenacity needed for keeping

a book of extracts might like to write down and remember. Though Acton's views have often a certain theoretic quality and a remoteness from the actual, they sometimes strike down to truths, cogent and practical truths, which the ordinary politician misses because he does not look at things in the light of a wide human experience. An instance is furnished by Acton's views on Ireland. He had, as far back as 1870 (p. 165), "ceased to be sanguine that the English could govern Ireland successfully"; and after 1880 he frequently advised Mr. Gladstone to consider the policy of granting some amount of self-government to Ireland and recognizing Irish national sentiment. He advised this when nearly all English politicians were of an opposite opinion; but it is worth remarking that his view was that of three out of the four most eminent English historians of the time, none of these three connected with Ireland, viz., J. R. Green, E. A. Freeman and S. R. Gardiner.*

He had no special connection with Ireland, though he had once sat in Parliament for a few years as member for the little borough of Carlow. His view was based partly on his passionate attachment to the principles of liberty in general, and his faith in the curative power of liberty, partly on his observation of the wholesome results which in modern Europe had followed from the recognition of the principle of nationality. He wrote me on this subject a letter, just after the Home Rule Bill of 1886 had been brought in, which stated that argument with even greater fulness and force than are assigned to it in the present volume: and from that conviction he never wavered, even after the defeat of the bills of 1886 and 1893.

Acton would have called himself a strong Liberal. But, in his attachment to party, as in everything else, he was singularly unlike the normal politician. He cared for doctrines most, for men less, for the corporate organization of a party least of all. The question of what party is and ought to be, had an intense fascination for him. He once told me that there was no subject (always excepting that History of Liberty, his "Madonna of the Future," on which he constantly thought and never wrote) which he so much desired to treat at full length. Here he gives us his

* By the fourth I, of course, mean Bishop Stubbs. He never wrote about politics; but, as a steady, quiet Tory, he was doubtless quite at variance with Acton's view.

view, expressed, as usual, in sentences which seem at first sight slightly inconsistent with one another, but were, to so subtle a mind, different sides of the same unity.

"Politics come nearer religion with me, a party is more like a church, error more like heresy, prejudice more like sin, than I find it to be with better men. And by these canons I am forced to think ill of Peel, to think, if you won't misunderstand me, that he was not a man of principle. The nature of Toryism is to be entangled in interests, traditions, necessities, difficulties, expedients; to manage us best one may without creating artificial obstacles in the shape of dogmas, or superfluous barriers of general principles. '*Périssent les colonies plutôt que les principes*' (which is a made-up sentence, no more authentic than '*Roma locuta est*') expresses the sort of thing Liberalism means and Toryism rejects. . . . But if party is sacred to me as a body of doctrine, it is not as an association of men bound together, not by common convictions, but by mutual obligations and engagements. In the life of every great man there is a point where fidelity to ideas, which are the justifying cause of party, diverges from fidelity to arrangements and understandings which are its machinery. And one expects a great man to sacrifice his friends—at least his friendship—to the higher cause" (pp. 199, 200).

Instructive as are Acton's comments on current events, and still more instructive as are the reflections into which those comments often run, most readers, and especially most American readers, will turn with keener interest to his remarks upon men and books. These have that outspoken freedom which belongs to a confidential correspondence, and may sometimes surprise the reader by their sweeping vigor. Writing without reserve, he is often trenchant yet never malignant. He was a discriminating judge, and an impartial judge, who did not suffer either his political or his religious proclivities to color his judgments. But he had, under a calm exterior and a guarded manner, a vein of passion which gave warmth and even fire to his deliverances, especially when any moral question was involved. The praise he bestows on Mr. Gladstone, the person most frequently referred to in the correspondence, may seem to be in some respects exaggerated. Yet no one had a keener eye for the deficiencies in the idol than this fervent admirer. He saw not only Mr. Gladstone's weak points in critical scholarship, as applied to the Bible or to Homer, but also the inner causes of his occasional mistakes in the conduct of public affairs. What fascinated him was the courage, the ardor, the sweep of intellectual view wherein his hero

rose above all his contemporaries. And if the language in which his admiration is expressed may appear now and then overstrained, it is to be remembered that where his feelings were aroused, Acton did sometimes allow himself the luxury of unqualified expression. There are other instances in this correspondence of what appears to be overstatement, because, though the praise, or the blame, may be deserved, only the one or the other is delivered, without the compensating opposite side of the case. The judgments passed on Mazzini and on Cardinal Newman, for instance, are evidently too severe, if taken alone. Had Acton been writing an estimate of the characters of these two men, that estimate would have left a quite different impression of his view as a whole. This undervaluing of Newman is not more strange than the inadequate appreciation of the political abilities of Lord Granville, whom Robert Lowe called the shrewdest of English statesmen, and on whose judgment Mr. Gladstone so greatly relied. Loyal, courageous and tactful, Lord Granville was a colleague whom his colleagues specially prized.

Here is a deliverance on Macaulay which does give both sides, but which most of us will think extravagant in its censure:

“Macaulay’s Essays are really flashy and superficial. He was not above par in literary criticism; his Indian articles will not hold water; and his two most famous reviews, on Bacon and Ranke, show his incompetence. The Essays are only pleasant reading, and a key to half the prejudices of our age. It is the History, with one or two speeches, that is wonderful. He knew nothing respectably before the seventeenth century, he knew nothing of foreign history, of religion, philosophy, science or art. His account of debates has been thrown into the shade by Ranke; his account of diplomatic affairs by Klopp. He is, I am persuaded, grossly, basely, unfair. Read him, therefore, to find out how it comes that the most unsympathetic of critics can think him nearly the greatest of English writers” (p. 173).

The explanation of this harsh judgment of the Essays (a key to much in the literary manner of the last age as well as to half its prejudices), is to be found in Acton’s dislike, or disgust, for Macaulay’s broad, offhand way of dealing with large subjects the details of which he had not mastered. The doctrine that no one should write on a period in history till he had explored all its nooks and crannies by independent research, is a true doctrine which cannot be disputed, like the Apostle’s direction, “Prove all things.” But it is a counsel of perfection.

Acton once censured a writer, who, in dealing with an enormously large subject, had said that he would have described one episode more fully if he had been able to spend some months in reading the files of the San Francisco newspapers during several years. Unhappily, he practised what he preached; and we are all of us the poorer for it. Could he have been induced to throw off swiftly essays like Macaulay's out of the fulness of his knowledge, they would have been, if less brilliant in form, more precious to the learned world. But Acton would, in his later days, have spent at least a year in preparing himself to write on any one of the many subjects which he already knew far more thoroughly than any other Englishman.

Scattered here and there one finds not a few acute (and almost always just) characterizations of the people he met. Of Sir Bartle Frere we read:

"He is a strong, an able and a plausible man. It is true that his strength is akin to obstinacy and self-will, that he is rather too plausible, and that he will gain his ends by crooked paths when he has tried the straight in vain. He is a dangerous agent, but, I should think, a useful adviser. Indians are not generally a healthy element in the body politic, and he has the constant vice of Indians, belief in force. But he has a breadth of mind that is rare among them; and I have known people that hated him because he is so good" (p. 17).

What follows is of Tennyson:

"The Poet made a favorable impression on my ladies and children. He was not only a gracious Poet, but he told us lots of good stories, read aloud without pressure, walked repeatedly with M.,* and seemed interested in the books he carried to his room [a trait specially pleasing to Acton]. . . . There was a shell to crack, but I got at the kernel, chiefly at night when everybody was in bed. His want of reality, his habit of walking on the clouds, the airiness of his metaphysics, the indefiniteness of his knowledge, his neglect of transitions, the looseness of his political reasonings—all this made up an alarming *cheval de frise*. But then there was a gladness—not quickness—in taking a joke or story, a comic impatience of the external criticism of Taine and others found here, coupled with a simple dignity when reading ill-natured attacks, a grave groping for religious certainty, and a generosity in the treatment of rivals—of Browning and Swinburne, though not of Taylor—that helped me through."

Acton was not himself a great lover of poetry, nor did his imaginative equal his reflective gifts. For the same reason, per-

* Lord Acton's eldest daughter.

haps, he never professed to be a connoisseur in style, nor did he set a high value upon it. The excellence of his own was due to the energy, the subtlety and precision of his thought and to his natural wit, not to any effort to secure rhetorical effects. Indeed, he looked upon the allurements of rhetoric in composition as dangerous, tending to lead men away from the pursuit of pure truth, and perhaps to obscure moral distinctions. That distinctions lie at the bottom of everything is a doctrine curiously illustrated by the following characterization of the man whom, outside his own family, he probably loved most in the world:

"Serenity has grown on Döllinger with years, although they were years of conflict and of the great grief that men who do not live for themselves can feel for the cause they have lived for. Strength, too, though in a less degree, by reason of a vice that besets another great man. [He meant Mr. Gladstone.] From a sense of dignity and of charity he refuses to see all the evil there is in men; and, in order that his judgments may be always charitable, generous and leaning to the safer side, he is not always exact in definitions or rigorous in applying principles. He looks for the root of differences in speculative systems, in defect of knowledge, in everything but moral causes; and, if you had remained with us longer, you would have found out that this is a matter on which I am divided from him by a gulf almost too wide for sympathy."

The same view has much to do with Acton's unfavorable judgment of Thomas Carlyle:

"Excepting Froude, I think Carlyle the most detestable of historians.* The doctrine of heroes, the doctrine that Will is above Law, comes next in atrocity to the doctrine that the flag covers the goods, that the cause justifies its agents, which is what Froude lives for. Carlyle's robust mental independence is not the same thing as originality. . . . Germany gave him his most valuable faculty, that of standing aside from the current of contemporary English ideas, and looking at it from an Archimedean point, but it gave him no rule for judging, no test of truth, no definite conviction, no certain method and no sure conclusion. But he had historic grasp, which is a rare quality, some sympathy with things that are not evident, and a vague fluctuating notion of the work of impersonal forces. There is a flash of genius in 'Past and Present' and in the 'French Revolution,' though it is a wretched history. And he invented Oliver Cromwell. That is the positive result of him."

*Like the other historians of that generation, Acton had a low opinion of Froude; nor did charms of style mitigate his severity.

Lest it should be thought that Acton was always and everywhere a hanging judge, I will quote a few lines giving his opinion of the writer whom, among his contemporaries, he most admired. It will be seen that his admiration was at bottom that of a historian. What he valued was the power of getting into the mind and life of persons remote in time, or in place, or in social environment, and making them real and alive, so as to comprehend how their ideas worked in and through them.

“ ‘Middelmarch’ revealed to me, not only George Eliot’s grand serenity, but her superiority to some of the greatest writers. My life is spent in endless striving to make out the inner point of view, the *raison d’être*, the secret of fascination for powerful minds of systems of religion and philosophy, and of politics, the offspring of the others: and one finds that the deepest historians know how to display their origin and their defects, but do not know how to think or feel as men do who live in the grasp of the various systems. And if they sometimes do, it is from a sort of sympathy with the one or the other, which creates partiality and exclusiveness and antipathies. Poets are no better. Hugo fails . . . as Shakespeare fails ignobly with the Roman Plebs. George Eliot seemed to me capable not only of reading the diverse hearts of men but of creeping into their skin, watching the world through their eyes, feeling their latent background of conviction, discerning theory and habit, influences of thought and knowledge, of life and of descent, and having obtained this experience, recovering her independence, stripping off the borrowed shell, and exposing scientifically and impartially the soul of a Vestal, a Crusader, an Anabaptist, an Inquisitor, a Dervish, a Nihilist or a Cavalier, without attraction, preference or caricature. And each of them should say that she displayed him in his strength, that she gave rational form to motives he had imperfectly analyzed, that she laid bare features in his character he had never realized ” (pp. 60, 61).

This vigorous piece of criticism has an interest beyond that of its subject. It throws light on Acton’s own conception of history. With all his passion for accuracy in details, with all his interest in speculation and in the world of abstractions, he was occupied, passionately occupied, above all things, in the effort to realize the soul of the past, the thoughts and emotions and beliefs of the men, whose past in events he was tracing. Not many historians have deliberately set themselves to this, which is the highest and most difficult part of their task. Few indeed have attained even a moderate success, and the success can only be moderate at best. It may, indeed, be plausibly argued that whoever should possess enough imagination to succeed in this side

of the historian's work would have too much imagination to permit him to apply that cautious and balanced criticism which the historian needs for other branches of his investigation. Acton never himself wrote any book in which he could have tried to carry out his own theory; unless, indeed, he should prove to have done so in the lectures on the French Revolution which he delivered at Cambridge, and which are before long to appear in print.

These Letters, though, as was observed in an earlier page, they throw a copious light on Lord Acton's gifts and opinions, do not solve all the problems his position suggests, and they may even be deemed to raise new problems. He was all his life a devout and devoted Catholic. That his friends knew; that the Letters show. But he expresses, not once, but repeatedly, not hastily, but deliberately, the most vehement condemnation of some things which he charges Rome—or at least the Popes—with having solemnly approved. The passages are too long to quote, but two sentences may serve as an sample:

“A speculative Ultramontaniam, separate from theories of tyranny, mendacity and murder, keeping honestly clear of the Jesuit with his lies, of the Dominican with his faggots, of the Popes with their massacres, has not yet been brought to light. Dollinger, who thinks of nothing else, has never been able to define it, and I do not know how to distinguish a Vaticanist of that sort, a Vaticanist in a state of grace, from a Catholic” (p. 131).

Here again the fire of moral indignation breaks forth. A crime is to Acton none the less a crime because committed from a perverted sense of duty, or by a man who might in other parts of his life—like St. Charles Borromeo (to whose encouragement of murder the Letters return again and again)—be saintly. Nor does a crime excite his horror any the less because it was committed three or four centuries ago, when the so-called “moral standard” was different from our own.

Most of the remarks upon this topic come from a long discussion, running through several letters, of the merits of a book now almost forgotten which had considerable success in its time—Shorthouse's “John Inglesant.” Acton's criticisms on the book are a remarkable illustration of the range and minuteness of his learning. He discovers dozens of errors, some of them grave errors, errors in dates, errors in names, errors in the attribution of opinions to persons, very few of which a normally well-educated

reader would have detected; and he seems to do this without any research, out of the fulness of his own personal knowledge, which was, I feel certain, no greater for the seventeenth century than it was for the sixteenth or the eighteenth.

The book leaves three impressions on the reader's mind. The first is that of this amazing exuberance of knowledge, ready to gush out at a moment's notice, a knowledge not merely of books, but of what is in books, a knowledge arranged, tested by critical methods, carefully digested, capable of being applied whenever and wherever it is wanted.

The second is that of the writer's wit. Acton sometimes failed to see the humorous side of things. Perhaps he was too serious, or too much absorbed in the hunt for explanations. "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*" might have been his motto. But he had a real faculty for expressing a truth, or an aspect of a truth, in the most pointed and polished form. These Letters sparkle with good things, though it is hard to detach them from their context for the purpose of quotation. The gem cannot be cut out of its matrix without suffering in the process.

The third impression is that of an intellect as untiring as it was powerful. When one met Acton in society, or stayed in the same house with him, he did not strike one as specially restless, but seemed able to take the world easily like other people. But here we see his mind incessantly at work, fastening upon everything he sees or hears as well as everything he reads, constantly striving to pierce below the surface to comprehend, to formulate. Mr. Gladstone led a wonderfully laborious life, but the sum of his thinking in the twenty-four hours of each day was not as large as Acton's. It is the unslakable curiosity that is here disclosed, the high voltage (if one may borrow a metaphor from the electricians) at which this eager active mind was ceaselessly working, that excites our interest and our wonder even more than does the volume of its garnered stores of learning.

JAMES BRYCE.